(b) if so, whether this would have any useful impact on further expansion and upgradation of the Indian information technology industry and development of high quality computers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) The United States of America controls the export of high performance computers to India through a system of export licenses and notification requirements. From time to time, the US Government reviews the guidelines and parameters for export of high performance computers. In January, 2002, the US Government has further liberalized the export control regime for such computers enabling export of computers capable of running at 190,000 Millions of Theoretical Operations Per Second (MTOPS) without the US exporters having to notify the US Federal Government.

(b) and (c) The high performance computers are useful in various compute intensive applications such as Weather forecasting, Seismic data processing, Bio-informatics, Molecular modelling etc.

Record Export of Foodgrains

*639. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
DR.TSUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether foodgrain export touched a record high during the financial year ending the 31st March, 2002;

(b) if so, whether Government have been able to earn foreign exchange to the tune of Rs. 4,000 crore due to the export of foodgrains;

(c) the countries to which foodgrain exports have recorded high;

(d) the*efforts being made to further improve foodgrain exports;

(e) whether Government have been able to clear the food-stocks that were stored in godowns; and

(f) if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): (a) and (b) The decision to offer wheat from the Central Pool for the purpose of export was taken in November 2000. The quantity of wheat lifted by exporters upto 31.3.2002 was 56.83 lakh MTs.

Rice from the Central Pool is being made available for the purpose of export with effect from the last financial year. The quantity of rice lifted during the financial year 2001 -02 was 19.85 lakh MTs.

The value of wheat and rice lifted so far from the Central Pool for the purpose of export is Rs. 4000 crore approximately.

(c) The countries to which exports are being made include, *inter alia,* Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Oman, Nigeria, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Sudan, UAE and Yemen.

(d) WTO compatible subsidies are being provided for the export of foodgrains from the Central Pool. Exporters have been given the option of selecting stocks from the depots of their choice. The export prices of foodgrains are now being fixed on quarterly basis and announced 45 days in advance to facilitate international negotiations for exports. An Empowered Standing Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (F&PD) has also been set up to interact with the exporters and take expeditious decisions on matters relating to exports.

(e) and (f) According to available information, the quantity of wheat and rice lifted from the Central Pool upto 30.4.2002 for the purpose of export aggregated 86.10 lakh MTs. The export of wheat and rice from the Central Pool has helped in reducing the stocks to that extent.